

The Stage and Its People

Sallie Fisher
in "Chinese Love"

Doris Keane
in "Romance"

Laura Hope Crewes
in "Mr. Pim Passes By"

Estelle Winwood
in "The Tyranny of Love"

The Latest "Macbeth"

Arthur Hopkins Discusses the Artistic Validity of His Experiment

HAVING made a bold experiment in producing "Macbeth" in a manner never before attempted on the stage, Arthur Hopkins owns to a share of the emotion professed by critics. Only his surprise is that the guardians of what is vital and true in dramatic art should criticize the legitimacy of the Hopkins-Jones creation because it cannot be easily squeezed into any of the molds heretofore chiseled for Shakespeare.

For the benefit of those who seek an exposition of the newest and most talked of "Macbeth," The Tribune has asked Mr. Hopkins for an expression on the subject.

"I had much rather let the piece speak for itself," says the producer. "After all, the play itself is the expression of what we have to say. Of course, the expression is not complete. Where in this life does one find perfect harmony between purpose and achievement, and where is the peace that comes of complete accord between power and expression?"

"Nevertheless, the 'Macbeth' as presented at the Apollo Theater fairly represents our true intent. As between the production and its critics, however, the question seems to be one of approaching the subject in a daring spirit or of greeting it with a gesture of dismissal.

"For example, a body of scientists assemble to receive a paper by another expert on a new discovery in subject or method. Naturally, the procedure would be to accept the paper's own terms and definitions and discuss it from the author's own viewpoint to examine its consistency, and discover its points of contact with known truth. It would be inconceivable that the congress should rise with the prayer, 'Now comes that thy servant depart in peace. There's nothing in it!'

"It seems to be a matter of personal circumstance. Our 'Macbeth' is a single production beyond the radius of the familiar field. The question is, Shall our circumstance be enlarged or shall anything outside that circle be dismissed? The latter alternative assumes that the theater has already reached its ultimate development. In that case it is the only human institution to be credited with that achievement.

"We think we have done something new in dramatic aesthetics, something outside the accepted circumference. There may be something in it, or there may be nothing. All we ask is that it be judged according to its own terms.

"We call it an experiment in a new field. We do not pretend to any hard and fast principles serving as a foundation for the new practice. Vital art grows out of independent experiment, not in allegiance to formulated rule. And we feel that there is need of a more discriminating public if the theater is to be developed. Rather than stunted or trimmed to fit the Procrustean bed of convention.

"As to the vital content of our interpretation of 'Macbeth,' I have said elsewhere that to our minds the tragedy is not the series of incidental murders, but rather that strong people can be picked up by forces they do not understand, which they are helpless to combat and by which they are dashed to utter destruction. The witches, we believe, are the age-old symbol for these evil forces of life that have hovered about for all time.

"With these postulates in mind we have endeavored to impart a dream quality to the play. We conceive a helpless Macbeth, a more pathetic figure than the one who ingratiates himself with the audience and later falls

into trouble through his own debauched will. In this sense the tragedy takes on something of the Greek type which displays the individual in conflict with Fate, an inscrutable power dominating alike actions of gods and men—the destiny of which they are the instruments and ministers. This superhuman aspect is religious in tone and is calculated to stimulate a lofty mood of awe.

"To those who were disconcerted by the minimum of objective action, we would say that this lack of objective is precisely our purposeful effect."

Clare Eames Gives Her Conception of Role of Mary Queen of Scots

THE process of realizing a historical character on the stage is always an interesting one, and often a perplexing one to the actor. This, of course, is especially the case where the nature of the character is in dispute, or where the physical aspect of the character was such that if the actor followed it closely it would interfere with his own best weapons of expression. The actor who plays a man like Lincoln, of course, has absolutely got to be a physical likeness, or nobody would accept him, and the events of Lincoln's life, and his character, are well known. There is small room for choice. But the further back into history one goes, or the more controversial the figure becomes, the more is left to the actor.

Clare Eames, who is to play Mary in Drinkwater's "Mary, Queen of Scots" at the new Ritz Theater on March 21, says that so far as she is concerned, when studying an historical role (she has also played, oddly enough, Queen Elizabeth, Mary's deadly enemy), the very first thing she strives to do is to forget everything she ever knew or read about the character, and to concentrate on the play.

"After all," she declares, "my task is primarily to interpret the author's work, the author's idea of the character, not my own. I try to immerse myself fully in the drama, and study the stage character—in the present case from Mr. Drinkwater's angle. After I feel that I have mastered that, then I read a little—not very much—about the character and still more about the age. In the case of Mary, I have now read certain bare chronicles, and also Hewlett's 'The Queen's Quair.'"

"I think the actor who interprets an historical character has got to feel quite as intensely as he feels the character, the soil in which the character sprang up and flourished. In Mr. Drinkwater's play, for example, I have got to feel, and if possible suggest to the audience, the background of paganism and emotionalism of the Roman Catholic Church, which was Mary's background, the soil which nourished her; and to feel and if possible to suggest the background of cultured, aesthetic France, when she came to grim, cold Scotland. The aesthetic contrast between that background and the Protestant court of Scotland is tremendous, and of course it is made manifest by Mary herself. And please don't think I am taking this task lightly!

"I have never seen Schiller's 'Maria Stuart' acted, but it isn't prejudice which makes me feel, from a reading of it, that Mr. Drinkwater's is a much more interesting play. Perhaps I like it better because it is so much more modern a play. I am going to make a prediction that from the pathological

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Lucile Watson Has Her Ideal Role in "The White Villa"

ON THE heroine of "The White Villa" Lucile Watson at last has a part to her liking. The piece which the Players' Fellowship and A. H. Woods are giving at special matinees in the Eltinge Theater arrived just in time, she believes, to save her from the doom of drawing room and adventure parts.

"The White Villa," adapted by Edith Ellis from The Dangerous Age of Karen Michaelis, avowedly concerns a pathological problem in the life of women. It deals with a year in the life of Elsie Lindtner, who, after twenty years as the circuspect and rather decorative wife of a complacent man of wealth, stuns her husband by demanding her freedom, the one thing his bounty had never been able to give her. With an unexpected legacy she buys a little island and retires there to her white villa, the creation of a handsome young suitor whom her better judgment reluctantly dismisses as too young to be her mate. Eight months of liberty, loneliness and tedium find her shaken.

She grasps at her waning beauty and summons the young lover. But he has found a new heart interest. Then she calls back her former husband, only to find that he, too, has plied his freedom toward another love. And the curtain falls on a defeated and emptied life.

Lucile Watson approaches the representation of Elsie Lindtner with a lively sense that somehow there is a balance of power in the incalculable forces of life. There are traits which the angels actually fear to tread.

"Don't ever boast," is the warning which Elsie Lindtner prompts in the mind of Miss Watson. "Even our thought is a challenge, and they—the forces out there—take up the challenge at once.

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Stage Gossip

A PERFORMANCE of Ibsen's "Ghosts" will be given to-night at the Longacre Theater, under the auspices of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Norwegian Children's Home. The cast is headed by Mary McInerney, an English actress, who is making her first appearance in America, and includes Edward Waldmann, Regina Wallace, Edwin Caldwell and Joseph Clancy.

Charles Ellis is to play the rôle of Columbine's indifferent husband in "And He Never Knew," the one-act play which precedes "The Emperor Jones" at the Princess, taking the place of James Light, who has been appearing in the part. The special matinee of "Diff'rent" will continue with both Ellis and Light in the cast.

The change of name of the Cohan & Harris Theater to the Sam H. Harris, announced by Sam H. Harris last week, is one that will be easily adopted by the public and will probably be further shortened to "The Harris" by the hurrying New York public, which has no time to waste on four syllables when two will do just as well.

Ruth Draper, whose original method of character impersonation affords interesting entertainment, will give two more recitals, on March 6 and 13, at the Apollo Theater.

Arrangements have been concluded by Anna Pavlova, Fortune Gallo and the S. Hurok Musical Bureau, who, after the 1921-22 tour of the United States and Canada, directed by Mr. Hurok, Mme. Pavlova will be taken to Australia by Mr. Gallo, for her first appearance in the Antipodes. Pavlova and her Ballet Russe will give a series of twelve performances at the Manhattan Opera House, beginning Thursday night, March 10, the repertoire including all of her most popular ballets and diversissements, with a number of new offerings.

At the Provincetown Playhouse the Provincetown Players present "Love," by Evelyn Scott. Ida Raub and William Rainey are in the principal parts.

At the Klaw Theater the postponed premier of Sam H. Harris' "Nice People" will take place.

At the Times Square Theater the deferred production by Augustin Duncan of Gregorio Martinez Sierra's "Cradle Song," in a series of matinees, will open.

At the Bijou Theater Henry Baron will present "The Tyranny of Love," adapted from the French, in a series of matinees. The cast: Estelle Winwood, Cyril Keightley, Georges Plateau, Margaret Dale, Ethel Wilson, Pauline Folk.

At the Punch and Judy Theater Clare Kummer will present in a series of matinees four one-act plays, two miniature musical comedies, "Chinese Love" and "The Choir Rehearsal," with Sallie Fisher, and two comedy playlets, "Bridges" and "The Robbery," with Ruth Gilmore.

Willard Mack on How to Write and Stage It in 6 Days

PLAYWRIGHTS waste much valuable time in the writing of plays because they are slaves to their artistic temperaments," says Willard Mack, who broke all speed records for the theater when his latest play, "Smooth as Silk," was written, staged and produced in less than six days.

Explaining his feat, the author-actor playwrights still like to play with the Muse and must fit to Palm Beach, to California or any other long hop from the producer's office, where the environment must be just so before any jeweled words can be assembled.

"This dilatory practice on the part of authors," says Mack, "is prevalent throughout all departments of the theater, which is sadly in need of modern business methods. The playwright takes his time. The producer roams around before making a decision. Then the stage manager must give his artistic temperament plenty of exercise, with the result that a feature play may take one year to round into shape for an opening performance.

"If he wants to a playwright can do just as well in a Harlem flat as out in sunny California, only most of the time he doesn't want to. But the delay in preparing a production isn't always the author's fault. Most of the time he is in ignorance of his cast and must do a tremendous amount of retouching when the company is finally selected.

"In writing 'Smooth as Silk' I was materially aided because I had my cast in mind before the first act was half finished. The remainder of the task was fairly easy, like having all the parts on hand and then assembling an automobile.

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The New Plays

THE last day of a quiet February prances gayly into the wings testooned sevenfold with garlands of plays. "The Tyranny of Love," "Chinese Love," why, the stuff lolls in the tree-tops of spring. There's "Nice People," "Romance," "Cradle Song" and "Mr. Pim Passes By." On such a sequence once did Pickwick walk in Goswell Street.

"Mr. Pim Passes By," a comedy by A. A. Milne, which opens to-morrow night at the Garrick Theater, is the fourth production of the Theater Guild this season. The play has been a big success in London, where the humor of the complications caused by the "absent-minded old doddler" in the conventional English home has been greatly appreciated. The action takes place in the morning room at Marden House, for which Lee Simonson has designed the setting. The play is directed by Philip Moeller.

Doris Keane comes back to New York to-morrow evening, at the Playhouse, in her great success, "Romance," by Edward Sheldon, which she played both here and in Chicago and then took to London, where she appeared as Lu Caralini for four years. A. E. Anson, who created the part of Cornelius Van Tuijl, and Basil Sydney, who plays the dual rôle of the Bishop and the Rector of St. Giles, support Miss Keane in the chief characters of the play. The English costumes and scenery have been brought over for this production, and the play is directed by Mr. Sidney.

Charles Ray's latest picture, "The Old Swimmin' Hole," from James Whitcomb Riley's poem of the same name. Sub-titles are done away with and the story is allowed to unfold itself naturally, leaving to the imagination of the audience the supplementary filling in of captions and explanations. How well the average movie fan will be able to get on without the hand with the pointed finger, "This way please," for guidance remains to be seen, but Director Plunkett, of the Strand Theater, who has the courage of his conviction that sub-titles are superfluous, says that their absence will be appreciated, and is willing to give it a try-out to prove that he is right.

Hugo Rosenfeld is preparing a special Easter program for children to be given forenoon at the Rivoli Theater during the week of March 27. The program will be made up of motion pictures, music and stage numbers reflecting the Easter spirit and will be similar to the entertainment Mr. Rosenfeld prepared for children during Christmas week.

In "His Sweethearts," which opens Monday night at the Park Theater, Earl Carroll will present Louis Mann in one of his dialect characterizations. "His Sweethearts" is a new version of "Daddy Dimples." Mr. Mann will be supported by Carl L. Dietz, Richard Farrell, Sterling Clarke, Andrew J. Lawlor Jr., Frances Powers, Georgine Haldron, Isidore Marcil, Dan Dawson, Marion Hutchins and others.

The new Klaw Theater, in Forty-fifth Street, west of Broadway, will throw open its doors for the first time to-morrow night, the premiere performance of "Nice People," by Rachel Crothers, having been deferred from last Thursday. Francine Farnum, in the leading rôle, will be supported by Merle Madden, Robert Ames, Frederick Perry, Tallulah Bankhead and others.

Another deferred offering is that of "Cradle Song," by the Spanish playwright Gregorio Martinez Sierra, which will be seen to-morrow afternoon at the Times Square Theater in the first of a series of matinees. Augustin Duncan is the producer.

Mae Marsh Writes a Book

Mae Marsh, the inimitable screen actress, has written a book called "Screen Acting." It tells all about what to do and what not to do before and after you become a screen star and when not to become one. The book contains illustrations of famous people and is altogether a very entertaining story. If Miss Marsh really wrote the story then she can write nearly as well as she acts. But one cannot help remembering that her husband, the popular writer, Louis Lee Arma. In the front of the book is a picture of Mae and her young daughter, Mary Arma. Mary evidently has inherited the beauty of both her parents, for she is one of the handsomest babies who ever adorned the pages of a book. The picture alone is worth the price of the book. "Screen Acting" is published by the Photo Star Publishing Company of Los Angeles.

The fourth bill of the Provincetown Players will open to-morrow with a three-act play by Evelyn Scott, entitled "Love." In the cast are Ida Raub—her first appearance this season—and William Rainey, whose acting in "The Spring" won much applause. "Love" will run for two weeks, closing on March 18.

Michel Fokine and his wife, Vera Fokina, will appear at the Metropolitan Opera House on Tuesday evening, March 1, in a ballet composed by Mozart in 1778, entitled "The Dream of the Marquis," which has not been produced in more than a hundred years. M. Fokine will dance the double rôle of a French marquis and a faun.

A new idea is being tried out this week at the Strand Theater, with

Morrie Ryskind Has Gone West

Because Morrie Ryskind wrote a book of romances called "Unconquered" as I Am, he has been chosen to write the titles for Katherine MacDonald's next picture, "Stranger Than Fiction." Miss MacDonald read the book, telegraphed to the author an offer, Ryskind accepted, and there he is. He immediately crossed the continent and is now at work at Miss MacDonald's studio in Los Angeles.